

To begin, this statement is premised on the concept that an open and balanced media is an absolute necessity to a well-functioning democracy. Citizens must have access to a range of relevant information to properly participate in the democratic process. Further, television still remains a primary source of that information. It is for these reasons that I am compelled to write.

Sinclair Broadcast Group's recent actions have illustrated the dangers to localism caused by media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.